

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-128 (Canceled).

129. (New) A method for communicating electronic data in a manner that identifies a sender, the method comprising:

associating an address of a sending device with a unique identifier that identifies a user of the sending device;

receiving, from the sending device, an electronic message at an intermediary located between the sending device and an intended recipient of the electronic message;

identifying the address of the sending device based on the electronic message;

determining the unique identifier associated with the user of the sending device based on the identified address and the association between the address of the sending device and the unique identifier;

changing the electronic message to include the determined unique identifier; and

forwarding at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message to the intended recipient.

130. (New) The method of claim 129 wherein the sending device is a client device.

131. (New) The method of claim 129 wherein the unique identifier associated with the user of the sending device is a screen name.

132. (New) The method of claim 129 wherein the address of the sending device includes an Internet protocol address.

133. (New) The method of claim 129 wherein the intermediary comprises a layer 4 redirection program.

134. (New) The method of claim 129 wherein the electronic message is an electronic mail message.

135. (New) The method of claim 129 wherein the electronic message is a news posting.

136. (New) The method of claim 129 wherein:  
changing the electronic message comprises appending the determined unique identifier to the electronic message; and  
forwarding the changed electronic message comprises forwarding the electronic message along with the appended unique identifier.

137. (New) The method of claim 136 wherein appending the determined unique identifier includes appending the determined unique identifier as a header to the electronic message.

138. (New) The method of claim 129 further comprising:  
determining whether the electronic message received from the sending device has characteristics of a message to be blocked;  
blocking the electronic message when the electronic message is determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked; and

wherein forwarding at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message comprises forwarding the changed electronic message that is not determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked.

139. (New) The method of claim 138 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked comprises determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked using a level 4 redirection program.

140. (New) The method of claim 138 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked comprises determining whether the electronic data has characteristics of a message to be blocked based upon the determined unique identifier.

141. (New) The method of claim 138 wherein blocking the electronic message comprises blocking the electronic message using a level 4 redirection program.

142. (New) The method of claim 138 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked comprises determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of an undesirable news posting.

143. (New) The method of claim 138 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked comprises determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of spam.

144. (New) The method of claim 143 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of spam comprises:

counting a number of connections that are open with the sending device; and

determining that the electronic message has characteristics of spam when the number of connections that are open with the sending device exceeds a threshold number.

145. (New) The method of claim 144 wherein the threshold number is configurable.

146. (New) The method of claim 138 further comprising blocking future electronic messages from the sending device for at least a period of time when the electronic message is determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked.

147. (New) The method of claim 143 wherein determining whether the electronic data has characteristics of spam comprises:

counting a number of electronic messages that have been received from the sending device during a period of time; and

determining that the electronic message has characteristics of spam to be blocked when the number of messages received from the sending device during the period of time exceeds a threshold number.

148. (New) The method of claim 147 wherein the period of time is configurable.

149. (New) The method of claim 129 further comprising redirecting the received electronic message from the intended recipient to a computing device capable of performing at least the identifying.

150. (New) The method of claim 149 wherein redirecting the received electronic message comprises changing a destination address associated with the received electronic message from the intended recipient to the computing device.

151. (New) The method of claim 129 wherein the electronic message includes a fraudulent return address.

152. (New) The method of claim 151 wherein forwarding at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message to the intended recipient includes forwarding the electronic message with the fraudulent address and the unique identifier.

153. (New) The method of claim 152 wherein the unique identifier comprises an Internet Protocol address.

154. (New) A computer readable storage medium storing a computer program for, the computer program comprising instructions for causing a processing device to perform the following operations:

- associate an address of a sending device with a unique identifier that identifies a user of the sending device

- receive, from the sending device, an electronic message at an intermediary located between the sending device and an intended recipient of the electronic message;

- identify the address of the sending device based on the electronic message;

- determine the unique identifier associated with the user of the sending device based on the identified address and the association between the address of the sending device and the unique identifier;

- change the electronic message to include the determined unique identifier; and

- forward at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message to the intended recipient.

155. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein the sending device is a client device.

156. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein the unique identifier associated with the user of the sending device is a screen name.

157. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein the address of the sending device includes an Internet protocol address.

158. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein the intermediary comprises a layer 4 redirection program.

159. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein the electronic message is an electronic mail message.

160. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein the electronic message is a news posting.

161. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein:  
to change the electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to append the determined unique identifier to the electronic message; and

to forward the changed electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to forward the electronic message along with the appended unique identifier.

162. (New) The medium of claim 161 wherein, to append the determined unique identifier, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to append the determined unique identifier as a header to the electronic message.

163. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein the computer program comprises instructions for causing the processing device to:

determine whether the electronic message received from the sending device has characteristics of a message to be blocked;

block the electronic message when the electronic message is determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked; and

wherein, to forward at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to forward the changed electronic message that is not determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked.

164. (New) The medium of claim 163 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked using a level 4 redirection program.

165. (New) The medium of claim 163 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to determine whether the electronic data has characteristics of a message to be blocked based upon the determined unique identifier.

166. (New) The medium of claim 163 wherein, to block the electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to block the electronic message using a level 4 redirection program.

167. (New) The medium of claim 163 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked, the computer program comprise

instructions for causing the processing device to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of an undesirable news posting.

168. (New) The medium of claim 163 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of spam.

169. (New) The medium of claim 168 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of spam, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to:

- count a number of connections that are open with the sending device; and
- determine that the electronic message has characteristics of spam when the number of connections that are open with the sending device exceeds a threshold number.

170. (New) The medium of claim 169 wherein the threshold number is configurable.

171. (New) The medium of claim 163 wherein the computer program comprises instructions for causing the processing device to block future electronic messages from the sending device for at least a period of time when the electronic message is determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked.

172. (New) The medium of claim 168 wherein, to determine whether the electronic data has characteristics of spam, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to:

- count a number of electronic messages that have been received from the sending device during a period of time; and



determine that the electronic message has characteristics of spam to be blocked when the number of messages received from the sending device during the period of time exceeds a threshold number.

173. (New) The medium of claim 172 wherein the period of time is configurable.

174. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to redirect the received electronic message from the intended recipient to a computing device capable of performing at least the identifying.

175. (New) The medium of claim 174 wherein, to redirect the received electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to change a destination address associated with the received electronic message from the intended recipient to the computing device.

176. (New) The medium of claim 154 wherein the electronic message includes a fraudulent return address.

177. (New) The medium of claim 176 wherein, to forward at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message to the intended recipient, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to forward the electronic message with the fraudulent address and the unique identifier.

178. (New) The medium of claim 177 wherein the unique identifier comprises an Internet Protocol address.

179. (New) A method for communicating electronic data in a manner that identifies a sender, the method comprising:

associating an address of a sending device with a user-defined identifier that identifies a user of the sending device

receiving, from the sending device, an electronic message at an intermediary located between the sending device and an intended recipient of the electronic message;

identifying the address of the sending device based on the electronic message;

determining the user-defined identifier associated with the user of the sending device based on the identified address and the association between the address of the sending device and the user-defined identifier;

changing the electronic message to include the determined user-defined identifier;  
and

forwarding at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message to the intended recipient.

180. (New) The method of claim 179 wherein the sending device is a client device.

181. (New) The method of claim 179 wherein the user-defined identifier associated with the user of the sending device is a screen name.

182. (New) The method of claim 179 wherein the address of the sending device includes an Internet protocol address.

183. (New) The method of claim 179 wherein the intermediary comprises a layer 4 redirection program.

184. (New) The method of claim 179 wherein the electronic message is an electronic mail message.

185. (New) The method of claim 179 wherein the electronic message is a news posting.

186. (New) The method of claim 179 wherein:  
changing the electronic message comprises appending the determined user-defined identifier to the electronic message; and  
forwarding the changed electronic message comprises forwarding the electronic message along with the appended user-defined identifier.

187. (New) The method of claim 186 wherein appending the determined user-defined identifier includes appending the determined user-defined identifier as a header to the electronic message.

188. (New) The method of claim 179 further comprising:  
determining whether the electronic message received from the sending device has characteristics of a message to be blocked;  
blocking the electronic message when the electronic message is determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked; and  
wherein forwarding at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message comprises forwarding the changed electronic message that is not determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked.

189. (New) The method of claim 188 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked comprises determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked using a level 4 redirection program.

190. (New) The method of claim 188 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked comprises determining whether the electronic data has characteristics of a message to be blocked based upon the determined user-defined identifier.

191. (New) The method of claim 188 wherein blocking the electronic message comprises blocking the electronic message using a level 4 redirection program.

192. (New) The method of claim 188 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked comprises determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of an undesirable new posting.

193. (New) The method of claim 188 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked comprises determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of spam.

194. (New) The method of claim 193 wherein determining whether the electronic message has characteristics of spam comprises:

counting a number of connections that are open with the sending device; and  
determining that the electronic message has characteristics of spam when the number of connections that are open with the sending device exceeds a threshold number.

195. (New) The method of claim 194 wherein the threshold number is configurable.

196. (New) The method of claim 188 further comprising blocking future electronic messages from the sending device for at least a period of time when the electronic message is determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked.

197. (New) The method of claim 193 wherein determining whether the electronic data has characteristics of spam comprises:

counting a number of electronic messages that have been received from the sending device during a period of time; and

determining that the electronic message has characteristics of spam to be blocked when the number of messages received from the sending device during the period of time exceeds a threshold number.

198. (New) The method of claim 197 wherein the period of time is configurable.

199. (New) The method of claim 198 further comprising redirecting the received electronic message from the intended recipient to a computing device capable of performing at least the identifying.

200. (New) The method of claim 199 wherein redirecting the received electronic message comprises changing a destination address associated with the received electronic message from the intended recipient to the computing device.

201. (New) The method of claim 179 wherein the electronic message includes a fraudulent return address.

202. (New) The method of claim 201 wherein forwarding at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message to the intended recipient includes forwarding the electronic message with the fraudulent address and the unique identifier.

203. (New) A computer readable storage medium storing a computer program for, the computer program comprising instructions for causing a processing device to perform the following operations:

associate an address of a sending device with a user-defined identifier that identifies a user of the sending device

receive, from the sending device, an electronic message at an intermediary located between the sending device and an intended recipient of the electronic message;

identify the address of the sending device based on the electronic message;

determine the user-defined identifier associated with the user of the sending device based on the identified address and the association between the address of the sending device and the user-defined identifier;

change the electronic message to include the determined user-defined identifier;

and

forward at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message to the intended recipient.

204. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein the sending device is a client device.

205. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein the user-defined identifier associated with the user of the sending device is a screen name.

206. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein the address of the sending device includes an Internet protocol address.

207. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein the intermediary comprises a layer 4 redirection program.

208. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein the electronic message is an electronic mail message.

209. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein the electronic message is a news posting.

210. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein:  
to change the electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to append the determined user-defined identifier to the electronic message; and  
to forward the changed electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to forward the electronic message along with the appended user-defined identifier.

211. (New) The medium of claim 210 wherein, to append the determined user-defined identifier, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to append the determined user-defined identifier as a header to the electronic message.

212. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein the computer program comprises instructions for causing the processing device to:  
determine whether the electronic message received from the sending device has characteristics of a message to be blocked;  
block the electronic message when the electronic message is determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked; and  
wherein, to forward at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to forward the changed electronic message that is not determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked.

213. (New) The medium of claim 212 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked, the computer program comprise

instructions for causing the processing device to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked using a level 4 redirection program.

214. (New) The medium of claim 212 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to determine whether the electronic data has characteristics of a message to be blocked based upon the determined user-defined identifier.

215. (New) The medium of claim 212 wherein, to block the electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to block the electronic message using a level 4 redirection program.

216. (New) The medium of claim 212 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of an undesirable news posting.

217. (New) The medium of claim 212 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of a message to be blocked, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of spam.

218. (New) The medium of claim 217 wherein, to determine whether the electronic message has characteristics of spam, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to:

- count a number of connections that are open with the sending device; and
- determine that the electronic message has characteristics of spam when the number of connections that are open with the sending device exceeds a threshold number.



219. (New) The medium of claim 218 wherein the threshold number is configurable.

220. (New) The medium of claim 212 wherein the computer program comprises instructions for causing the processing device to block future electronic messages from the sending device for at least a period of time when the electronic message is determined to have characteristics of a message to be blocked.

221. (New) The medium of claim 217 wherein, to determine whether the electronic data has characteristics of spam, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to:

count a number of electronic messages that have been received from the sending device during a period of time; and

determine that the electronic message has characteristics of spam to be blocked when the number of messages received from the sending device during the period of time exceeds a threshold number.

222. (New) The medium of claim 221 wherein the period of time is configurable.

223. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to redirect the received electronic message from the intended recipient to a computing device capable of performing at least the identifying.

224. (New) The medium of claim 223 wherein, to redirect the received electronic message, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to change a destination address associated with the received electronic message from the intended recipient to the computing device.

225. (New) The medium of claim 203 wherein the electronic message includes a fraudulent return address.

226. (New) The medium of claim 225 wherein, to forward at least a selected portion of the changed electronic message to the intended recipient, the computer program comprise instructions for causing the processing device to forward the electronic message with the fraudulent address and the unique identifier.